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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
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RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2028
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2149
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0691
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1426
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1784
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2205
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4636
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1291
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000489

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR S. HILL
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS
STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: ZIM VIOLENCE INCREASING AND MORE SEVERE

Classified By: Ambassador James McGee for reason 1.4(d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) The Zimbabwean director of the Counseling Services Unit (CSU) describes the increasingly severe and numerous injuries inflicted on Zimbabwean citizens as the worst violence Zimbabwe has seen since CSU's opening in 1993. Describing the increased use of weapons and severe beatings, Dr. Frances Lovemore opined that the ZANU-PF infrastructures that are propagating the violence are highly organized and increasingly fearless as they target MDC leaders and members without fear of punishment or imprisonment. CSU is an excellent provider of medical care and is also very careful in documenting injuries and deaths. While its employees have not been targeted, Lovemore knows the Zimbabwean Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) has an office across the street and regularly photographs CSU's office. END SUMMARY.

Injuries Increasing in Number and Severity

12. (C) On June 4, 2008, poloffs met with Dr. Lovemore at CSU's main office in downtown Harare. Dr. Lovemore reported that CSU has treated 1,700 victims of violence since the March 29 presidential election between the incumbent, ZANU-PF's Robert Mugabe, and the Movement for Democratic Change's (MDC) Morgan Tsvangirai. The volume of patients has increased since election results were released on May 2. CSU saw more than 100 people each day in May versus their 10 per day average in April. The severity of injuries has increased as well. CSU notes a marked increase in head injuries, falange (beating on the soles of the feet), and long bone fractures -- all indicative of extreme use of force. In addition, at least seven people have been shot by military-style rifles in May (versus one in April).

13. (C) Currently, 200 CSU patients are in the hospital in

the Harare area, mainly with deep soft tissue wounds, multiple fractures, head injuries, and lacerations. CSU has seen axe injuries as well. In some victims their deep soft tissue wounds have resulted in renal failure that may be permanent. Many who have been injured require multiple surgeries and expensive long-term care. CSU has opened additional beds at a hospital in the suburb of Chitungwiza to accommodate the increased number of patients.

54 Dead - and Counting

¶4. (C) CSU is meticulous in its procedures to confirm each reported death and injury. Dr. Lovemore confirms 54 deaths in the politically-motivated post-election violence. She acknowledges the actual number is likely much higher. Health care workers in rural areas are often watched and cannot communicate what they are seeing to CSU or others in Harare. Lovemore said that the ability of doctors, ambulances and others to move patients is limited and unpredictable, and largely dependent on the strength of the ZANU-PF structure in a given community. The greatest challenge is bringing victims to Harare for appropriate treatment. Consequently, the injuries of victims staying in their rural communities often go undocumented and untreated.

The Evil of the ZANU-PF Structures

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¶5. (C) Dr. Lovemore spoke with passion and frustration as she decried the political nature of the violence. She noted that violence has moved closer to Harare. As the ZANU-PF youths move each night, attacking different villages or neighborhoods, the location of the victims and the "no-go" areas shift. She also said that "soft" police officers are moved daily to ensure roadblocks are "appropriately" staffed. Poloff asked about rumors of ZANU-PF militia posing as MDC rally leaders and use these "rallies" to gather names of MDC supporters who are later targeted. Dr. Lovemore confirmed she had heard "hundreds" of similar reports.

¶6. (C) Normally a composed, even-toned woman, Dr. Lovemore raised her voice and declared that, "the biggest mistake of the West is that (we) do not know the depths of evil of the ZANU-PF structures." She said the level of violence is reminiscent of the liberation struggle, with citizens forced to attend ZANU-PF rallies and sing songs throughout the night. She further explained that the GOZ's Joint Operation Command (JOC) retains abundant resources and influence as they allow ZANU-PF youths to take grain and livestock from villagers. She cited Emmerson Mnangagwa (reported to be in charge of the JOC), in particular, as being extraordinarily wealthy, having brought home a huge war coffer from Zimbabwe's excursions in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the late 1990s.

COMMENT

¶7. (C) Dr. Lovemore's anger and frustration with the political situation is growing as the number of injuries and deaths rise. While CSU's meticulousness in tracking statistics inevitably means that some un-confirmed data is left out, the dramatic increase in patients seen daily (from 10 per day in April to 100 per day in May) and the number of those needing hospitalization is testament to the increasingly brutal tactics of ZANU-PF as it endeavors to cling to power. END COMMENT.

McGee